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AXMINSTER  
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REPORT

OF

Medical Officer of Health,  
1925.



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# MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT



AXMINSTER,

*May 10th, 1926.*

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
AXMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I submit to you the Annual Report of the District for the year 1925.

## Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (Acres)	...	...	...	51468
Population (Census 1921)	...	...	...	9735
Estimated Population (1925)	...	...	...	9943
Number of Inhabited Houses (1921)	...	...	...	1365
Number of Families or separate occupiers (1921)	...	...	...	1315
Rateable Value	...	...	...	£89595
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£373

The inhabitants live under comfortable conditions. The chief occupation is Agriculture and Dairy Farming.

## Vital Statistics.

Births registered 159: Legitimate 83 Males, 69 Females.

Illegitimate 5 " 2 "

Birth Rate 15·9. The rate for England and Wales was 18·3.

Deaths registered 88—Males 41, Females 47. A Death Rate of 8·8. The rate for England and Wales was 12·2.

58 were over 65 years old

20 between 65 and 75

28 " 75 " 85

9 " 85 " 90

1 over 90.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age—Legitimate 4  
 Illegitimate nil]

A Death Rate of 25.1 per 1000 births.

One Woman died of Puerperal Insanity.

There was no death from Measles, Whooping Cough or Diarrhoea.

Amongst the general Death Rate—

1	death	was	caused	by	Uleer	of	the	Stomach
1	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Poliomyelitis
2	deaths	were	"	"	"	"	"	Influenza
2	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Rheumatic Fever.
3	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Pulmonary Tuberculosis
3	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Arterio-sclerosis
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Acute and Chronic Nephritis
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Premature Birth
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Violence
7	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Cancer
5	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Cerebral Hæmorrhage
14	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Heart Disease
5	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Bronchitis
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	Pneumonia

Amount paid in Out-relief during 1925—£2266 13s. 11d.

No cause of sickness or invalidity has been specially noteworthy during the year.

### General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

1. Tuberculosis.—The County Council have provided Sanatoria at Ivybank, Exeter, and Hawkmoor, Bovey Tracey.
2. Maternity and Children.—Union Infirmary, Axminster. Cases can be admitted to the Cottage Hospital, Axminster, when beds are available.
3. Fever and Diphtheria cases are admitted to the County Council's Isolation Hospital at Whipton.
4. Smallpox.—The County Council has arranged to provide accommodation if required.

The Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, the Eye Infirmary, Exeter, and the Cottage Hospital, Axminster, admit patients from the District.

The Union Infirmary at Axminster is the only institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children.

**AMBULANCE FACILITIES.**—For infectious cases the only provision is the ambulance from the Isolation Hospital at Whipton for cases going there. For non-infectious and accident cases a motor ambulance at Honiton, supported by charges for its service and voluntary subscriptions.

**CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.**—None in the District.

### **Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.**

*Medical Officer of Health*—WM. LANGRAN, L.R.C.P., (part time).

*Sanitary Inspector & Building Surveyor*—W. H. BIGGS, (whole time)—qualifications :

- (1) Certificate Sanitary Inspectors' Examinations P.H.A. 1891, London.
- (2) Certificate as Sanitary Inspector Royal Sanitary Institute.
- (3) Certificate as Inspector of Meat and other Foods.
- (4) Royal Sanitary Institute Certificate in Sanitary Science as applied to Buildings and Public Works.

Half salaries paid by County Council.

A Health Visitor, who is also School Nurse, provided by the County Council.

### **Professional Nursing in the Home and Midwives.**

**GENERAL.**—All the Parishes in the Area, with the exception of Membury, have resident Parish Nurses, who are also certificated Midwives. They are supported by voluntary subscriptions and fees. The Sanitary Authority also subscribe.

No provision for infectious diseases.

There are six Midwives practising in the Area.

### **Legislation in force.**

Public Health Act 1890 section 19.

“        “        “        1907        “        III.

Housing Acts.

Building Byelaws and Drainage of existing houses.

Dairy, Cowsheds, Slaughter House and Milk Shop Regulations.

Byelaws in respect of Foreshore at Beer—Stalls, Tents, &c.

### **Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.**

#### **WATER :**

**AXMINSTER HAMLETS.** Population 819. Wells. In Smallridge one tank holding about 780 gallons from which 60 persons obtain a supply, owned by the Rural District Council.

**CHARDSTOCK.** Population 916. Supply from Wells. I have previously recommended a supply for this Village.

**COMBPYNE.** Population 81. The Village is supplied by water from Rousdon which is plentiful and good. The Railway Station and three cottages are supplied with water brought in cans by rail from Lyme Regis. Complaints have been received as to the quantity and quality. Correspondence has passed between the Rural District Council and Southern Railway, but up to the present no improvement in the supply has been made.

**KILMINGTON.** Population 456. Wells are the chief supply. There is one small tank and two standpipes for about 30 persons. A better supply is needed.

**HAWKCHURCH.** Population 450. Wells. There is one public pump in the Village supplying the occupants of 16 houses.

**ROUSDON.** Population 67. Water supplied by the Estate satisfactory.

**AXMOUTH.** Population 594. The lower part of Village supplied by standpipes from two storage tanks; the upper part by springs from the hillside. There is an abundance of water if properly collected, stored and piped.

**MEMBURY.** Population 552. The Village is supplied by standpipes piped from storage tank outside Village. Wells.

**BEER.** Population 1157. Excellent supply both in quality and quantity, supplied by the Rolle Estate.

**MUSBURY.** Population 370. Village supplied by standpipes from storage tanks up to 2400 gallons.

**UPLYME.** Population 870. Several small supplies, two privately owned and one belonging to the Rural District Council. The latter is not satisfactory, liable to be polluted by cattle, attention is being given to it.

**DALWOOD.** Population 318. Village supplied by standpipe, piped from storage tank outside the Village. Wells.

**STOCKLAND.** Population 731. Wells only. I have in previous Reports advocated a supply for this Village.

**COLYTON AND COLYFORD.** Population 1958.

Colyton—Intermittent piped supply to houses.

Colyford—Piped supply to standpipes and taps in houses, recently purchased by the Rural District Council.

## RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The sewage of Colyton empties into the river untreated. No action has been taken to check it.

## DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE.

Axminster Hamlets	Pail Closets.	No Sewers.
Chardstock	...	ditto
Combyne	...	ditto
Kilmington	...	ditto
Hawkechurch	...	ditto
Rousdon	...	ditto also cesspools.
Axmouthe	...	ditto ditto
Membury	...	ditto ditto
Beer	...	Mostly water closets, a few pails.
Musbury	...	Pail closets, a few privies. Sewers needed.
Uplyme	...	Water closets and pails.
Dalwood	...	Pail closets.
Stockland	...	ditto
Shute	...	ditto
Colyford	...	ditto, a few water closets.
Colyton	...	Water closets.

There are no disposal works in the District.

A proper system of sewers and disposal works is much required in Colyton.

## CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Throughout the Area where defective privies are found they are converted into pail closets, also endeavours are made to have one provided for each house.

## SCAVENGING.

This is carried out in the following Parishes—Beer, Colyton and Colyford, for house refuse only. A considerable number of ashbins furnished with proper covers have been provided in the above Parishes.

## Summary of Work of Sanitary Inspector.

Bakehouses, number of inspections	...	21
Dairies and cowsheds	ditto	34
Slaughter houses	ditto	107
Drains laid	...	41
Drains repaired	...	3
Samples of water taken	...	3
Number of new wells sunk	...	21
Railway Stations, number of inspections	...	9
Privies converted into E.C.'s	...	7
Ashbins provided	...	33
Roofs repaired	...	4



Privies repaired	...	...	4
Yards repaired	...	...	1
Premises reconstructed	...	...	1
W.C.'s repaired	...	...	1
Additional W.C.'s provided	...	...	3
Sewers repaired	...	...	1
Water supply provided	...	...	1
Ditto improved	...	...	2
Windows repaired	...	...	2
Stores (new) provided	...	...	1
Ceilings repaired	...	...	3
Premises disinfected	...	...	15

### Schools.

The County Council are building a new School at Dalwood, the present one is insanitary.

Hawkechurch School has no water supply.

## HOUSING.

### General Housing Conditions in the Area.

**AXMOUTH.** The cottages in this Parish are old, but kept in fair repair by the Stedcombe Estate. The Council have not undertaken the erection of any houses here. Two subsidy houses have been built, another commenced. Four cottages are being built.

**AXMINSTER HAMLETS.** There is a shortage of houses here. Many cottages are very old and not worth repairing. The Council have erected six non-parlour type houses, let four at 5/6 per week and sold two. They have six parlour type in course of erection and have let contract for a block of three non-parlour type in Smallridge. There have also been erected seven subsidy cottages and three more are being built.

**BEER.** The Cottages in this Parish are fairly good. The Rolle Estate are gradually demolishing those past repair. Subsidies have been granted for the erection of twenty cottages, these are all completed and occupied.

**CHARDSTOCK.** Cottages old and in many cases not worth repair. One owner now demolishing five and building four in their place. The Council have erected three non-parlour cottages and let them; on Wagsplot site have built eight non-parlour cottages, sold two and let six; on Cuckhold Pit site two non-parlour cottages and let them. Private enterprise, with the help of a subsidy, has built five houses.



**COLYTON.** In this Parish there are some small congested areas, the houses very bad, lack of light and ventilation. Private enterprise, with the help of a subsidy, has erected eighteen houses. The Council have built eight non-parlour cottages, sold four and let four, also four parlour type, three of which have been sold. A piece of land has also been purchased on which to build twelve non-parlour type houses, a contract has been accepted for them.

**DALWOOD.** The houses in this Parish are old and let very cheaply from 1/6 per week. Private enterprise, with subsidy, has built six houses.

**HAWKCHURCH.** Housing satisfactory. No request up to the present for Council to build. Two subsidy cottages being erected.

**KILMINGTON.** There is a scarcity of houses here, and many applicants when one becomes vacant.

**MEMBURY.** Cottages in this Parish fairly well kept. The Council have built four and contemplate erecting two more.

**MUSBURY.** A few old cottages in the Parish. The Council have purchased half-an-acre of land on which to build four non-parlour houses.

**ROUSDON.** Housing satisfactory here.

**SHUTE.** There is a shortage of houses. Sites are being looked out on which to build four or six houses.

**STOCKLAND.** Many old cottages here. The Council have built four non-parlour type and let them.

**UPLYME.** Cottages in parts of this Parish are rather crowded on space. Private enterprise, with subsidies, has built twenty-six houses. The Parish Council are looking for a site or sites on which to build.

### Housing Statistics for the year 1925.

Number of houses erected during the year—Total 133 :

By the Local Authority	...	49
By other bodies or persons	...	84

#### 1. *Unfit dwelling-houses.*

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	..	37
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	..	37
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	..	Nil
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	.. ..	15

## 2. *Remedy of defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal notice by the Local Authority or their Officers .. 43

## 3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

### A.—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- |                                                                                                                                                      |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs .. ..                                                        | 15  |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—                                                              |     |
| (a) by owners .. ..                                                                                                                                  | 15  |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners ..                                                                                                       | Nil |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close .. .. | Nil |

### B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- |                                                                                                           |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .. | 36  |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—            |     |
| (a) by owners .. ..                                                                                       | 36  |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners ..                                                            | Nil |

### C.—Proceedings under sections 11, 14 and 15 Housing Act, 1925.

- |                                                                                                                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders .. ..                                                 | Nil |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made .. ..                                                     | Nil |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit .. .. | Nil |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made .. ..                                                  | Nil |
| (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .. ..                                                     | Nil |

## **Inspection of Food.**

Milk supply in the Area is plentiful, wholesome and good.

Number of licences granted for the sale of milk under special designations— . Devon County Council issue.

MEAT.—Meat inspection is fully carried out.

1. No marketing of meat in the District. During the year 700 lbs. were surrendered, and after saturating with disinfectant buried.
2. Only one stall in the Market. No meat hung outside shops. Glass windows not kept up.
3. No public slaughter house.

## Prevalence of and control over Infectious Diseases.

Notifiable infectious diseases during the period since 1920 have only averaged 16 a year.

Diphtheria Anti-toxin is supplied by the Sanitary Authority free for poor patients. One case of Encephalitis Lethargica notified—the patient came down from London ill. No return cases of Scarlet Fever. During the period 38 cases of Pneumonia were notified, almost half the total number of notifications.

Arrangements are made by the County Council for the examination of pathological and bacteriological specimens and frequently made use of.

The Sanitary Inspector disinfects after Infectious diseases. Carrier cases of Diphtheria in children are not allowed to attend School until swabs are negative.

No use has been made of the Schick or Dick tests, or artificial methods of immunization.

No primary vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the M.O.H. under the Public Health (Small-pox Prevention) Regulations 1917.

### Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1925.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths.
Small-pox ... ..	Nil		
Scarlet Fever ... ..	1		
Diphtheria ... ..	Nil		
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) ...	1	Nil	
Pneumonia ... ..	<del>2</del> 5		
Other diseases generally notifiable ... ..	Acute Poliomyelitis 1 Erysipelas 2		1
Other diseases notifiable locally ... ..	Nil		

**Tuberculosis.***New Cases and Mortality during 1925.*

Age Periods.		New Cases.				Deaths.			
		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	...	1	2	...	3	...	...	...	...
20	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...
25	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...
35	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
45	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
55	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 & upwards	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Totals	...	1	7	2	3	1	2	...	...

*Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925.*—No tubercular employee in the milk trade notified.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WM. LANGRAN,

*Medical Officer of Health.*









